

USA TODAY
27 APRIL 1983

Reagan vow: El Salvador no Vietnam

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USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — President Reagan told USA TODAY he intends to assure Congress and the USA tonight "there is no comparison whatsoever" between administration actions in Central America and the beginning of involvement in Vietnam.

Reagan said the situations cannot be compared because "there is no and has never been any talk" of sending troops to Central America.

On the eve of a national TV address at 8 p.m. EST, Reagan:

■ Said he intends to make it "difficult, in fact, impossible" for Nicaragua to arm guerrilla movements in El Salvador and elsewhere in the region.

■ Condemned the Nicaraguan government as "the center" of leftist guerrilla activities. "The arms and the training and even the direction of guerrilla military movements are all centered in Nicaragua."

■ Insisted he would push forward for the full \$60 million in increased military aid he is seeking for El Salvador, despite a House subcommittee move Tuesday slicing it in half. Reagan mistakenly said he got the full amount from the Senate — it hasn't voted yet.

■ Said his speech tonight will not reveal any more information about secret CIA actions in Nicaragua.

Earlier this month, Reagan said the USA was attempting to cut off arms supply lines between Nicaragua and El Salvador rebels. But he said there was no violation of the law banning use of military aid for the overthrow of the Nicaraguan government.

If anti-government forces in Nicaragua say they are using U.S.-supplied arms to overthrow the government, Reagan said, "We can't control what they say."